



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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History Excursions which were attended with so much success last year, will be resumed in May. Names should be sent in as soon as possible. Mrs. Franklin is "at home" on Thursday mornings, and will be pleased to give all particulars of this and other work of the branch. There will be no lecture or debate in April. Mrs. Steinthal will lecture on May 6th as announced.

CLAPHAM.—A drawing-room meeting was held on February 25th at 27 Cedars Road (by kind invitation of Mrs. Bideleux), when Miss O'Connor read a suggestive paper on "The Claims of the Literary Side of Education;" an animated discussion followed. The Rector of Clapham occupied the chair. A Reading Circle was held on March 5th at Windmill House (by kind invitation of Mrs. Duke). Very few members attended on account of the bad weather, and Mrs. Duke read aloud instead of the usual portion of "Home Education" that admirable article in the March number of the *Parents' Review*, "The Great Recognition."

DULWICH.—The annual meeting of the members of the Dulwich Branch was held at Toksowa House (by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs. T. J. Edwards) on March 24th. On January 30th an address was given by Canon Daniell on "Our religious duties as parents to our children," and on February 25th an address was given by Dr. G. B. Batten on "Nursery Hygiene." The annual meeting of the members of this branch was held on March 24th, at Toksowa House (by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Edwards).

HIGHGATE AND CROUCH END.—On February 12th a meeting was held at 2, Christchurch Road, when an excellent paper was contributed by Geo. Piper, Esq., on "Should children have free access to works of fiction?" The next address will be given by Ernest Gale, Esq. Date and title to be shortly announced.

EASTBOURNE.—At a drawing-room meeting at West Hill (by kind permission of Mrs. Barber) a most interesting address was given by Miss Willis, who had on that day been appointed one of H M. Inspectors of Schools, and who is the first woman who has held that important post. Miss Willis's address was followed by one from Mr. Geo. Home, who very kindly repeated his demonstration lesson, by which he makes the teaching of geography wholly delightful in its association both with natural science and current events.

EDINBURGH.—The Rev. H. J. Wotherspoon's thoughtful and earnest address on "The Religious Teaching of Children" was given on February 14th at 10, Wemyss Place (by kind invitation of Mrs. Ferguson); and on Friday, March 13th, at 7, Heriot Row (by kind invitation of Mrs. Greenfield), Miss Jessie Macgregor, L.R.C.P. and S.E., read a most interesting and useful paper on "The Physical Education of Growing Girls." A lecture on "The Teaching of Natural History to Children" will be delivered on Tuesday, April 7th, by the well-known biologist, Mr. J. Arthur Thomson, M.A., F.R.S.E.

THE PARENTS' REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE
OF HOME-TRAINING AND CULTURE.

"Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

GOADS.*

BY CANON SCOTT HOLLAND.

It is really very kind of you to listen to me, for I have no right to speak on this subject. I know nothing about education, and I have only been concerned with the overgrown babies at Oxford—the undergraduates; so I will not go into any details, for you would probably correct me at each step, but I will fall back upon principles.

We will run through the thoughts suggested by the obviously familiar subject "Goads," a title which will explain itself at first sight. I will assume that we all are pondering and questioning, "How are we to use Goads"?

For the problem comes to us in something of this form:—These children of ours—here they are for us to handle and deal with; wonderful creatures, sweeping on us at every turn, charming us always, vexing us no doubt, but this is by accident, by the way, by perversity of circumstance. Surely in themselves they are intended to grow up as young plants, to find their powers arrive, to disclose or discover themselves by their inward necessity of living. The forward impulse of life,—the bubbling force, the push or press of the juices, the stir in the blood and brain—these form the natural impetus by which the life reaches out to its proper fulfilment.

The motion generates itself from within, faculties open out of themselves, the springs have only to be unsealed, out the waters flow. Nature calls from without to the Nature that lurks undeveloped within, and there is bound to be true response to the call if only there is freedom. Things wake and move and feel their power, the instinct to grow is enough

* Lecture addressed to the Belgravia branch of the P.N.E.U.

to carry them forward. Give them room and air and light, and they will do the rest. Education is simply evocation—the calling out of capacities, releasing what is there, setting Nature free. We have but to invoke, to invite, to welcome, to attract, perhaps to rouse what hangs back, or to kindle what is sluggish. But still, part and parcel of our principle is to let things happen, to liberate, to wait upon what comes, to provide channels, a passage; to watch this wonderful thing, life, disclose itself as a bud, a star.

Education should be pure joy, for freedom is joy; and souls that find their powers arrive should laugh and sing, for growth is natural, and to be natural is to be oneself, and to be oneself is to be glad.

Now, when we have said all this, we may well ask, why, then, should there be any need of goads, to bully, or to frighten, or to thrust, or to drive? Why should there be pricks to kick against? Why are our poor chicks to find themselves cooped up, pinned down to weary tasks, grinding at hated jobs? Why are there pains and penalties, black looks, forced efforts, compulsion, or menace or tears? Surely, all this represents an educational failure; the system which uses them stands condemned by the use. And then again, the thumbscrews, the racks of horrid examinations, over pressure, the hideous fever of competition, cram, anxieties, strained nerves, exhaustion, things to be got up for examination which are tiresome, flat, uninteresting and uncongenial—all these mechanical exercises are treadmills, which seem useless, joyless, detestable. They are learnt only under the terror of the examination and forgotten when once it is over, and the victim is like a man goaded into heated, unnatural activity by stimulants.

Is this education, or the caricature of education? Where is our hope vanished of a smooth, living, natural outgrowth of capacities? a plant by the waterside, bringing forth fruit in due season; a harmonious and delightful process of disclosure, of self-discovery; a glorified kindergarten?

This is what is in the air, and I suppose we all feel the sting of the question. For we cannot but recognize that what we have been saying is obviously true in a very large measure. It is profoundly necessary to correct artificial and cramped traditions. We have much to break loose from; and the sweep of the reaction is strong. But don't let us be

carried off our legs. Allowing full measure to these appeals, and giving Nature her swing, aiming at disclosure as the end of education, we must still ask, can we then throw away our goads? Are there to be no more prickings and spurrings? No more compulsion, strain, effort, no more necessity for the sharp reminder? Can education dispense with the spur, with the violent pressure of examination, with the painful grind, with the use of force, with the violence on self and others? If it can't, when and where will such pressure be justified? To arrive at the answer to this question, let us distinguish two stages, two purposes, two aims in education. These two purposes are, (1) The evocation of gifts; (2) The evocation of the self that possesses and uses the gifts. These two purposes are very distinct, and we will take each in turn, arriving at the point where the goad is necessary.

(1) *The evocation of gifts.* Here, of course, is the field of a large and primary department of education, and here it is that so much of what we have been saying is to the point. The object is to detect the capacities, to tempt them out, to foster their activities, to encourage their display and their growth. We set our minds to discover any natural bents, instincts, excellencies. Here the guiding principle is to wait on Nature in the child, to follow up, to prompt, to bring to the surface what is there. Our part is negative—not to force, not to hurry, not to twist, not to thwart, not to ignore. On the position side we have to provide an atmosphere of favourable conditions, opportunities, encouragement, variety of scope; above all, aiding the child to disclose its true self, uncramped, undistorted, with nothing concealed, suspected or lost. Let it find its joy in using the faculties given to it; let it be a joy to grow, to learn. The educational motive is to tempt tenderly and enticingly the entire body of capacities into their natural exercise.

Yet even here a point is soon reached at which the natural instruction growth finds itself arrested, unless it submits to grind, and to grind which is painful and dry. For there is an enormous amount of underwork to be done before the natural capacity can be carried to the scientific point. It is man's special function that he goes beyond the point to which natural instinct carries him. The animal stops where the instinct stops; but it is not so with man. Man acts from instinct, then he turns round on himself and asks, "how

could I do that better?" Then he tries again, corrects, modifies, improves. Nature is the base of action, suggesting—reason, intellect, takes up the suggestion and improves it. Thus, there is a perpetual advance in man's life which we call civilization. Human effort takes up the suggestion at the point that nature ends, and drives it ever further and further on.

Now here it is that we come upon the strain of the under-work, which has to be done,—a strain which is ever becoming more severe for those who, like ourselves, have arrived on the field late in the day.

For the collective effort has advanced far beyond the point where natural instinct was arrested. And the evolution of the individual, as we learn from Physiology, has to be brought up level with the evolution of the race; thus each man is rehearsing the story of the race. The child has to bring up his capacities to the line where the race now stands. Enormous efforts are required to do this, but the child has to go through it. Helps and appliances must be brought to bear. We all have to do in a few years what it has taken the race thousands to achieve.

All underwork, undergrind is summed up in that dreadful word, which we know so well in music, "Practice." We remember the joyless schoolroom hours of "practice" and "scales." "Practice" is doing the underwork, and is inevitable in bringing the individual capacity level with the main body. We all know the fatigue of catching up anyone who has got the start of us; it must be a solid grind, for no natural capacity can cover the ground. It is the intellectual manipulation of a natural capacity, the art on the top of nature, which has got to be gone through, and is never excused. Now I defy anyone to get through this practice—this development of natural capacities—without black hours, reluctance, pain. It is a touch of the goad, there are pricks, pressure, painful striving, all that is musically embodied by "scales," a misery to ourselves and our friends. "Scales" meet us in every department, yet we need not be afraid of this if only the capacity played upon, exercised, is natural to the child. Then, the inner instinct of victory—of mastery—will carry it through,—the sense of gaining efficiency, of expansion, the desire for the end. And it can be assured, that others have gone through the same routine and succeeded.

We can be confident so far, by remembering our own childhood. For we never then minded grind if we had an object in view, as in the case of games when we would go through untold miseries. Stand by the river at Oxford when the Torpids are training, with sleet falling, the air sopping with the floods, dull dead awful skies overhead, the men tired—and then they tell you that this practising is fun, and they really enjoy it! And there is someone coaching them from the bank, shouting at them, abusing them, and they have no power to rebel. There never was such absolute authority; but yet they saw the end, and therefore bore the grind. It was a natural instinct at work; and justified itself. So, when we are using the natural capacity we can bear the goad and grind. In games we can see the goal, but in education it is a long way off. It is like the little boy, who, having painfully mastered the alphabet, thought it was a great deal of trouble for so small a result. We have to go on without feeling any satisfaction for days, months, years. Scales—still scales. But, supposing that we are on the track of exercising the natural talents, all will come square and right in the end.

Now let us take the second head.

(2) *The evocation of the self*, which is the real end of education—the self, the man, which is within and behind the capacities. After all, the development of capacities is not the final goal, for the capacities are but materials for use. But the highest function of education lies in the calling forth of a central will, a spring of character, a force of judgment, which makes up individuality; and personal distinction, personal self-possession, personal self-direction is the outcome. This self at the start is enveloped in its own faculties, its own gifts; it is indistinguishable from its instincts, temperaments, moods, likes and dislikes. It goes where they go, and does not separate from them. It is their prey, their captive. This is what charms and delights us in the child—this child heart; and this temperament remains in those who are children for life, and charm us irresistibly—the artist and the poet.

But with manhood comes self-possession and self-government, that is self in conscious possession of its impulsive life—holding it in hand, directing, discharging, balancing, freeing, modifying and correcting the assemblage of forces with which it finds itself gifted by nature—the sum of its capacities. This involves the disentangling of self

from its forces—of personality from its gifts—disengaging it, unswathing it.

Life then becomes a double thing.

(1) The Will.

(2) The Gifts.

Really the art of education consists in finally disentangling the will, and setting free its action; in bringing about reflection, analysis, consciousness, responsibility, a sense of moral control. First the will must be called into play, "My capacities are my own, to be a part of me. They are a charge to answer for." This is true of each. The self is above and beyond the gifts and master of them. This is true of even the artist and the poet. They are always acting by reflection on what they feel, not by impulse, but by reflection upon impulse. As Browning pictures it in "Two Poets of Croisic," speaking of the poet's soul. When the chariot dragged by horses is at full speed, he asks that he may see between the horses' heads the kindly human face of him who has still his hands on the reins.

Collected self-possession is the highest development. "I am I"—the supreme *Ego*. Dedication, devotion, these involve disentangling self from the gifts in order to have the gifts to lay down.

Therefore the highest office of education is to disentangle, to unswathe, to sever self from the natural capacities, to evoke the central will, the royal will, the priestly will; and the education which does this has different aims and methods from that which evokes gifts—that worked by beguiling, attracting, winning, spurring, avoiding self-consciousness.

Now the effort is to force the distinction upon the child, "You and your instincts are two, not one, and they are to be driven apart as life grows." Not, "I obeyed my natural instincts," however good, "I followed my natural bent," "I developed my natural capacities." But, "Why obey"? "Why follow"? You ought to direct, judge, estimate, control; it is *you* who wield your capacities, *you* who govern their development, *you* who take their measure, consider what to do with them, and give them their value and their proportion. To do this you must stand outside them, and ask, "What are they worth?" You must estimate their work, and know how they stand to capacities not yours. Ask, "Who among men and women go ahead of me?"

Now this opens a large field in the moral and spiritual as well as the intellectual world, but we will keep purely to the intellectual side, and see what is evolved. To take the measure of your own capacities means detachment and impartial judgment; and this is education. The educated man or woman is the one who has trained his judgment to estimate the proportion of things, who is able to stand outside his own natural gifts and, in some measure, to gauge their proportionate value to other gifts unlike his own, or to the same gifts in others. Short of this, man is nothing but a splendid animal, highly developed, with magnificent gifts, but no moral manhood, no educated judgment, no power to estimate proportionate value, no education.

We will take three signs of educated judgment.

(1) *Concentration*. The faculties can be brought to bear upon the matter in hand, apart from moods, likes or dislikes; concentration involves detachment, self-abstraction, placing self at the disposal of other people. This is all a discipline; we have to force ourselves to break off from what we like doing in order to do something else; it is often pain, struggle, effort of the most joyless sort. This is one of the goads.

(2) *Equity*. Intellectual equity is the power of estimating the proportion and balance of things. Not to see a world filled with your own private interests, but to see the other side; to hear as they hear, to make allowance for foreign uncongenial considerations, forcing oneself to consider what appears to be an absurd judgment, that we may see how a person came to make it. The educated person has equity. It involves many difficulties—violence to preconceived notions, setting self aside, and forcing oneself to see from another point of view. Here goads come into play.

(3) *Response*. To be able to respond to another person is the surest sign of an educated person, *i.e.*, intercourse with other minds. Some persons talk most charmingly, but they are never affected by what you say. You are merely the necessary peg for them to hang their talk on; if you speak there is no effect on the continual stream, there is no real educated play of mind going on. As Plato said when the Sophists made long and beautiful speeches, "Like brazen pots, they go on ringing, but they can't answer." Power to answer what another person has said, to reply to "why?" to let his

speech enter your mind and affect your speech, this is education. Education culminates in the art of conversation. Socrates was the prophet of true education; and he pictured it as full of pains, goads, terrors. He said, "If you really mean to be educated, you must submit. I will give myself to the task of being the disagreeable torpedo-fish; I will paralyse you. I know my own ignorance; so I devote myself to showing other people theirs. That is why I am so much disliked. If you won't be angry at this, and still will go on, I will be the gad-fly, and stick on and sting you into activity." Essential to education are confutation, confusion, misery; the sense of being a fool, a hopeless idiot, wrong at every point, paralysed. And, for all who can survive this, there follows the gad-fly, round and round the field, raging, hot, spurred, the gad-fly sticking close. This is mental gymnastics. But then, at last, for those who have endured, comes the deliverance, the true birth of thought; though pain still, the pain of travail.

This, then, is education; the power to stand outside natural gifts, to appreciate gifts not your own, to have a true self-judgment, a faculty of free criticism; the critical, educated mind to be separated, detached from its envelopment, and turned this way and that, involving practice of it over every matter put before it, whether interesting or not. This in its highest sense is philosophy, but everyone who claims to be educated must have a touch of philosophy, the capacity for intelligent intercourse, for conversation. Everyone must be able to converse, and the art of conversation depends on detachment of intellectual judgment, on getting outside the ring-fence of private interests, and getting inside another's ring-fence. But the will won't put out its power without a squeeze, a pinch, and it is for this that I would venture to defend, even on philosophical grounds, examinations. Nothing was ever invented like an examination for squeezing. Our intellectual muscles must be developed by the mental pressure, as our physical muscles are on an emergency. If the house is on fire we can carry all our family out on our shoulders. We need the pressure to be put on to evoke the will to act beyond the mere impulse of the wish.

Another object of an examination is to say, "You are worth so much." No one can tell his worth till he is measured with others. I may feel the greatest genius in the world till I

go in for an examination, and come out at the bottom. Then I know that I am fitted for what a 3rd or 4th class man can do—I arrive at an estimate of my educational worth.

Plato, in his Republic, long ago sketched the outlines of a State Education, which should devote itself exclusively to the sheer development of capacities under the gentle and continuous and favourable pressure of a perfectly selected environment. The growth was to be purely natural. But, then, as he saw, it must be also purely uncritical. Self-reflection, self-analysis, self-consciousness—these must be absolutely barred. The children who are to grow up as plants by the waterside must instinctively acquiesce in all they find. Everything that could kindle in them a desire to question or criticise the situation must disappear. No goads, no pangs for them: because no self-direction, no self-government. But for those few who should emerge out of this level, and should shew themselves qualified to discuss, review, control, possess their own life, the system of Education would be completely reversed. Every faculty should be stung into action; the desire to question should be provoked and fired. Difficulties should be proposed; problems arranged; the power to think for oneself without energy, persistence, patience, courage, spirit, passion.

So he saw. And what he saw to be necessary for the very few, we know to be necessary for all. For *all* are bound to attain an equality of manhood: *all* must govern and possess themselves. Therefore, for all, the strain of self-mastery, of detachment, of criticism, of judgment. For all, the discipline of struggle, the test of endurance, the proof of pluck. For all, in their educational training, the pain of effort, the travail-pang of thought. Why not? Is not education the preparation for life? And is not life a probation? And can there be probation without stress, and strain, and struggle, and effort? Life is the trial-hour of will: it tests its tenacity; it proves its worth; it purges its tone; it purifies its character. Not without the flame is the pure gold refined. Not without dust and heat is the race run, and the goal attained. Our children, as they pass out of the education by which they are equipped, must find themselves braced already for a task that demands toughness of nerve and the courage of self-compulsion.